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Presented by the Marquis Salisbury

A

LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE,

LORD-LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS ROTULORUM

OF THE COUNTY OF HERTFORD.

———For love of Grace,
Lay not that flatt'ring Unction to your Soul,
That not your Treſpaſs, but our Madneſs ſpeaks:
It will but ſkin and film the ulcerous Place;
Whilſt *rank Corruption* mining all within,
Infects unſeen———
Repent what's paſt, avoid what is to come;
And do not ſpread the Compoſt on the Weeds
To make them ranker.———

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MDCCLXXX.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE.

My Lord,

I Shall make no apology to your Lordſhip for thus publickly addreſſing you. Any man, but particularly one of your Lordſhip's rank, as Lord-Lieutenant of a County, who chuſes to diſtinguiſh himſelf at the head of a proteſt in which he condeſcends to explain the motives of his conduct, muſt expect and invite a free diſcuſſion of thoſe opinions, which if they do not hope to convince others, muſt at leaſt be meant as a perſonal juſtification of the diſſentient. Your Lordſhip's birth and independent fortune, and, I ſhall not mean to flatter when I ſay your character, hitherto gives additional regret to thoſe who hoped to have ſeen you engage yourſelf in a bet-

ter cauſe. 'It is the misfortune of ingenuous youth to be the moſt eaſily deceived, and drawn imperceptibly into the violence of party, by the artifice of thoſe who are grown grey in politics, are hackneyed in the trammels of a court, and who have long known no other principles of their actions but their pride, their intereſt, and their ambition. Unfortunate connections, the tincture of foreign education, the glitter of a court, with the near proſpect of more ſolid advantages, which the reſignation of Lord Carmarthen *may* now put into your poſſeſſion, form a bias at your time of life, that nothing but a very ſuperior underſtanding can reſiſt. The firſt ſtep in your career has probably decided the colour of what remains, and all the privileges which nature, birth and fortune have conferred upon you, to render you reſpectable, amiable and independent, will, if you do not take care, be ſunk in the character of a court Polonius.

This, my Lord, you will ſay, and you will ſay truly, is of little importance to the public; neither was it the object which induced me to give your Lordſhip this trouble: my motive was of more general concern, a wiſh to enter into the examination of the ſix ſeveral articles which I underſtand are to be the ſymbol of the court, and to furniſh arguments to all ſuch *ſcrupulous* and *tender conſciences* who ſhall decline uniting with the voice of their country in reforming thoſe abuſes they have ſo ſtrong an intereſt to maintain. The ſon of a ſecretary of ſtate, at the head

head of a county meeting, diſſenting from the opinion of the majority of the gentlemen preſent in the only probable means of obtaining a remedy to evils which he could neither deny nor defend; threatening a proteſt, which after much time and deliberation is drawn up in private, ſigned in private, and at length is given to the public with all the names that can ſtamp authority upon it as a *piece juſtificative* of the court; ſuch a paper ſo accredited, deſerves attention, and muſt be conſidered as ſomething more than the opinion of Lord Cranborne, or of all the names, however great, that are affixed to it. It has doubtleſs undergone the drowſy lecture of the miniſter, the haſty peruſal of the crown lawyers, the *ſagacious* obſervations of a preſident of the council, together with at leaſt the corrections of Lord Mansfield's Scotch ſecretary of ſtate, and the preciſion of his Iriſh colleague. It comes out then a finiſhed performance, and as ſuch you have *expoſed* it to the public; as ſuch let us now proceed to its diſſection.

1ſt. "Becauſe we apprehend the true ſenſe of "the county cannot be collected, nor the matters "propoſed duly examined in a meeting of this "nature, ſo new in its form, and ſo void of re-"gularity, or any known or eſtabliſhed autho-"rity."

Pardon me, my Lord, if I can hardly treat with the reſpect due to ſo authoriſed a performance an article which ſeems as if it could not have been ſeriouſly inſerted. What! my Lord, ſup-

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poſe the meeting to have been new in its ... irregular and without authority, could not the ſenſe of the county have been collected? Could they not have declared their opinions upon the matters propoſed when they were aſſembled together for no other purpoſe; when there was no conſtraint upon them, but every freeholder was at liberty to attend, to deliver his ſentiments freely, upon ſubjects concerning which he had already prepared himſelf? Was examination and diſcuſſion in any way precluded, or was your Lordſhip prevented from expreſſing your diſapprobation as ſecurely as others had expreſſed their zeal in the ſupport of liberty? What other mode would your Lordſhip ſuggeſt by which the ſenſe of a county can be taken than that of a public meeting, to which every rank of freeholder is invited avowedly to declare his opinion upon an object pointed out to his attention? But, my Lord, this mode of collecting the ſenſe of a county at a meeting advertiſed by the ſheriff, is ſo far from *new*, *irregular* and *unauthoriſed*, that your Lordſhip knows it is the conſtant practice, not only for the nomination of county members, but alſo for their election under certain regulations preſcribed by act of parliament; it is indeed the only mode by which the ſenſe of the freeholders can be taken. It is true, the ſanction of the ſheriff's name has been wanting to the meetings in ſome other counties where the ſheriff's have aſſigned certain reaſons for their conduct, and the public have attributed to them ſuch

motives

motives as they have thought proper; nevertheleſs as thoſe meetings have been public and general, by advertiſement, they have been thought to collect the ſenſe of their reſpective counties as *truly* as if they had been ſummoned at the requeſt of the ſheriff. But I am aſhamed to take up your Lordſhip's time upon a ſubject that does not admit of two opinions.

2dly. "Becauſe many aſſertions are made in "the petition propoſed to be preſented to the "Houſe of Commons, in ſupport of which no "proofs have been adduced at the meeting."

This argument has been ſo often uſed in the two Houſes of Parliament with *irreſiſtible force*, to prevent the work of reformation, that I do not wonder it is urged upon this occaſion as a plauſible pretence to with-hold an aſſent from propoſitions, the notoriety of which it is univerſally admitted, but which it is impoſſible to prove in the detail at a public meeting. As the proteſtors do not ſpecify the allegations in the petition which they conceive require proof to be adduced in ſupport of them, we are to ſuppoſe that *every aſſertion* ought to have been proved at the meeting before it was admitted; we were to begin then by proving that we were engaged in war; then, that it was expenſive; that it was unfortunate; that many of our colonies had declared themſelves independent; then the confederacy with France and Spain; that they were dangerous and inveterate enemies of Great Britain; and ſo by degrees having called witneſſes to all theſe points, we were

then

then to examine the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether any and what debt had been accumulated through theſe misfortunes: we ſhould have ſummoned merchants as to the ſtate of our trade, artificers to the ſtate of our manufactures, and I believe amongſt our own body we might have found ſufficient evidence, of the fall of our rents. Having thus got through the firſt paragraph of the petition, we muſt have examined witneſſes to prove that frugality is the more neceſſary in proportion, as our expence increaſes and our reſources diminiſh; a propoſition which would probably have occaſioned much debate and a pretty large diviſion in the negative, with ſome illuſtrious names at the head of it; and though the exiſtence of ſinecure places, penſions, &c. might have been got at by bringing the parties before us upon oath, God knows how we ſhould have been able to prove that ſuch expences were improvidentially ſquandered, much leſs that any influence was thereby derived to the Crown or its miniſters. Theſe I take to be the allegations of the petition that *require proof.* As to the prayer of the petition to inveſtigate and correct abuſes, and not to grant farther ſums of money beyond the preſent taxes, till ſuch grievances are redreſſed, and to apply the ſavings which may ariſe from this plan of œconomy to the ſervice of the public, I do not underſtand any farther evidence is neceſſary than to prove the identity of each perſon who ſubſcribes to the petition, and that he is a gentleman, clergyman or freeholder of the county of Hertford.

" 3dly.

3dly. " Becauſe the petition appears to us to con-
" vey inſinuations injurious and diſreſpectful to
" Parliament and dangerous to the conſtitution;
" and rendered more ſo, as it is accompanied by re-
" ſolutions explanatory of the intentions and pur-
" poſes of it."

Here are two grounds of objection taken; the one to the petition, the other to the reſolutions that accompany it. I have read the petition over and over, it is in the uſual form of petitions to that honourable houſe and couched in the moſt reſpectful terms. If to lament the diſtreſſes of the country, to ſtate the neceſſity of public frugality and the abuſes which prevail, and to call upon our natural guardians, not to *add* to the burthen of our taxes till a plan of œconomy ſhall have taken place, be an inſult upon that body, what communication can there be for the future between the people and their repreſentatives, unleſs like the addreſſes to the crown we only echo back our approbation in the language of fulſome flattery for all the ſufferings that are impoſed upon us. Is it a novel language that the redreſs of grievances ſhould precede the grants of money, or is it a crime in the people to complain? Whence is to accrue the danger to the conſtitution? Is it from Parliament adopting a courſe which is juſtified not only by the ancient practice of the Houſe of Commons, but by the very nature of its inſtitution? or is it becauſe the people preſume peaceably, reſpectfully, though pointedly to remind them of their duty? If the contents of the petition are neither injuri-

ous nor diſreſpectful, except to thoſe who feel themſelves the authors of our public calamities, neither can the reſolutions bear any ſuch interpretation. What are they? The firſt is merely an approbation of the petition, and the ſecond appoints a committee of forty-one gentlemen "to carry on the neceſſary correſpondence *for effectually promoting the object of the petition*" which is rendered ſtill more efficacious by recommending to them, "to prepare a plan of aſſociation upon *legal* and *conſtitutional* grounds to ſupport that laudable reform, and ſuch other meaſures as may conduce to reſtore the freedom of Parliament." That ſuch committees and aſſociations of independent gentlemen are particularly obnoxious to thoſe who wiſh to extend the powers of corruption and by that means to undermine and ſubvert the freedom of Parliaments, together with the liberty of the ſubject, I can eaſily believe; becauſe without ſuch union and conſiſtency, the petitions might be treated with the contempt which all remonſtrances of this tendency have hitherto met with; but that any alarm can be taken from aſſociations upon ſuch principles openly avowed by any well-wiſher to the conſtitution ſeems to me as extraordinary as if they were to receive the countenance of the court and the ſupport of the miniſter.

"4thly. Becauſe that part of the petition "which relates to the granting of ſupplies ap-"pears to us to be an attack upon the rights and "privileges, and freedom of the Commons of "Great Britain, in Parliament aſſembled."

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If the petition was calculated to do the very reverſe of what it ſays; to *deprive* the Houſe of Commons of the right it has always poſſeſſed of reforming the evils of the ſtate; to *deprive* them of the power of that reformation, by taking from them the privilege of with-holding the public purſe till the grievances are redreſſed, this fourth article would be unanſwerable and would be indeed ſuch an attack upon the conſtitution, that if it prevailed would totally overturn it; but in this petition theſe rights and privileges, are not only acknowledged but ſupported and called upon as the only conſtitutional means of ſalvation to this country, and to every thing that is dear to us. Does the petition arrogate to the freeholders of Hertford the rights of the legiſlature, to reſcind ſinecures, to withold the payment of taxes, or to levy new ſupplies upon the ſubject of their own authority; no, they ſay to the Houſe of Commons, to you theſe powers are delegated by the people for their preſervation, we call upon you in our diſtreſs, exert your rights and privileges; we have nothing elſe to look up to, be true to us; to yourſelves, and to our poſterity.

" 5thly. Becauſe we conceive that the petition " and reſolutions are calculated to produce diffi- " dence and ſuſpicions in the minds of his Ma- " jeſty's ſubjects at a time when unanimity and " confidence in government are eſſentially neceſ- " ſary to ſupport and invigorate the exertions of " the ſtate in our defence againſt the moſt formi- " dable attack that has been ever made againſt " his Majeſty's dominions."

This article does indeed contain matter of very ſerious conſideration. The moſt fortunate ſtate of our domeſtic ſituation would certainly not be more than is required to repel the dangers which threaten us from without; and unhappily for us there never was a time when *unanimity* and *confidence in government* was more wanting *to invigorate our exertions.* It is to reſtore that unanimity and confidence that the work of reformation is undertaken. It is not by the continuance of miniſters who have been the authors of our ruin, by ſupporting the undue influence of the Crown, which has formed an intereſt in oppoſition to the proſperity of the country, by conniving at the profuſion and miſapplication of public money, by encouraging a ſyſtem, which, whilſt it has rendered us objects of pity or deriſion in every court in Europe, has in a great meaſure alienated the affections of the people from Parliament, has degraded the reſpect due to the perſon of our Sovereign, and has ſunk the ſpirit of a brave people into a deſpondency and ſtupor from which they are now beginning to awake. It is not, I ſay, by a wilful perſeverance in errors, that the minds of men are to be called out to the laſt exertion of our ſtrength, but by convincing them that Parliament is vigilant to their intereſts, that the ſervants of the Crown have *their* intereſt at heart, that what they freely give ſhall be wiſely and honeſtly adminiſtered, not to the purpoſes of corruption, but to the ſafety of the commonwealth.

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The petitioners and the proteſtors agree in the ſame premiſes though they draw from them oppoſite concluſions.

The ſixth article, which cloſes the proteſt, goes not againſt the petition, but the reſolutions appointing the committee of correſpondence, " apparently tending to over-awe the legiſlature, by " collecting and combining the factious diſcontents of the ſeveral parts of the kingdom into " one ſyſtem, upon which to found powers, and " to introduce meaſures inconſiſtent with, and " ſubverſive of, our preſent happy conſtitution, " and to eſtabliſh a plan which appears to us to " lead to the greateſt calamities which can befall " our country, *viz.* inſurrection, confuſion, and " anarchy." I have already, under the third article, explained what is the nature of this aſſociation, which bears ſo formidable a conſtruction. Would not any reader, who candidly compares them together, the reſolution, with the comment upon it, be tempted to paraphraſe the proteſt in the f llowing manner :

" But we do moſt particularly proteſt againſt the reſolutions for appointing a committee of correſpondence, apparently tending to over-awe the *miniſtry*, by collecting and combining *the ſentiments of the independent gentlemen of the kingdom* into one ſyſtem, upon which to found *weight ſufficient* to introduce meaſures of *reformation*, inconſiſtent with, and ſubverſive of, our preſent happy *plan* of *venality* and *corruption*, and to eſtabliſh *an œconomy and ſpirit of public diſintereſtedneſs* which appears

pears to us to lead to the greateſt calamities that can befall us, *viz. a free parliament, reſponſible miniſters, a confidence in government, and the loſs of our employments.*"

In fact, what are the names the moſt conſpicuous in the liſt of the proteſtors? The ſon-in-law of Lord Hilſborough, ſecretary of ſtate; the Earl of Sandwich, firſt Lord of the Admiralty, whoſe *civil liſt* of extraordinaries, above what has been granted by parliament in this war, from 1775 to 1779, both incluſive, amount to *twenty-two millions, ſeven hundred ſixty-ſeven thouſand, nine hundred and eighty ſeven pounds*; an abject Earl of Clarendon (with his ſon) the Chancellor of the Dutchy of Lancaſter, whoſe viſible emoluments were much the ſmalleſt part of the advantages he has derived from his office; an Earl of Marchmont, keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland, alas! once diſtinguiſhed by the prophetic irony of Pope amongſt the patriot band; a penſioned Earl of Eſſex, with his ſon; a Duke of Marlborough, ſcarcely known in the country he obtrudes himſelf into; but whoſe brothers, the one has lately had the appointment to the Treaſurer of the Chambers, the other is a Lord of Trade, whilſt Blenheim, and 60,000 pounds a year, cannot give a ſervile mind the privilege of independance.

And can you really flatter yourſelves, my Lord, that ſuch arguments, and ſuch champions, will convince the world at large, that Mr. Rigby ought to enjoy an income of thirty or forty thouſand

pounds

pounds *per annum* ariſing from public money, for what the loweſt clerk in his office would do as well upon a ſalary of fifty pounds? No, my Lord, your caſtle is like the old enchantments impoſing at a diſtance; but, when ſummoned by the loud voice of truth, believe me, it will moulder into nothing. The day is not far off that anounces to you *that greateſt of all calamities.* The people begin to know, and, what is worſe, to feel their ſituation. This is no intricate queſtion, but level to all capacities. The gentleman whoſe rents muſt be paid in kind, if he exacts them; the farmer, whoſe produce remains a drug upon his hands; the manufacturers, who have above half a million of cloth undiſpoſed of; the merchant, whoſe credit cannot obtain him the advance of 1000 l. upon Engliſh ſecurity; the ſtockholders, who tremble for their intereſt, whilſt they reflect that already, ſince the war, their capital has ſunk in value no leſs a ſum than 40 millions. In ſhort, every man who feels the diſtreſſes of the times come home to his own door, and who thinks of nothing but ruin to his family, or the narrowing the ſcale of his expences, will ſcarcely ſuffer himſelf to be perſuaded, that taxes, wrung from the hard hands of peaſants, ſhould be waſted in penſions and ſinecures, to procure majorities in parliament, or ſquandered amongſt jobbers and contractors, to feed the hungry dependents of a miniſter. I am not ignorant, my Lord, that there are two methods of diſcrediting the preſent ſpirit of freedom, which are not neglected by the court: The one is

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to repreſent it as the laboured work of a diſappointed faction, who would have recourſe to any violence to bring themſelves into office: the other is to alarm the cautious friends to liberty with apprehenſions, that however legal, temperate, and unexceptionable, the avowed purpoſes of the petitions may be, yet there are other intentions in the breaſts of thoſe who are the promoters of them, that they aim at no leſs than the vitals of the conſtitution, and will drive every thing to the hazard of a civil war. As to the firſt inſinuation, if it ſhould impoſe upon any man, it certainly cannot impoſe upon the gentlemen themſelves, who compoſe the reſpectable meetings in each county: They beſt know whether they are actuated by the narrow partial views of faction, or the general zeal for the public welfare. In truth, what an object for intereſted ambition! to reduce the ſalaries of office, to aboliſh ſinecures, and to put the public expences under the ſtricteſt regulations of frugality. But courtiers, ſay they, are ambitious, and courtiers, ſure, are honourable men. What is the ſituation of the country, to tempt the ambition of any man who does not feel a wiſh to riſque his own concerns in the hope of ſaving the intereſts of the public? Is there the inducement of avarice? The very ſyſtem they ſtand pledged to, is in oppoſition to it. Is it in hopes to immortalize their names, by reſtoring this once happy empire to its antient ſplendour? Alas! it is not in the power of all the talents and faculties that were ever given to man, to replace

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us in the ſituation his Majeſty found us in at his acceſſion. To chuſe amidſt a multitude of evils, to mitigate what cannot be cured, to delay, at leaſt, what, perhaps, cannot be prevented, to pacify the importunate, to calm the violent, to rouſe the indolent, to find reſourſes in œconomy, to prop declining commerce, to manage in thoſe courts where we uſed to dictate; in ſhort, to feel all the humiliations, and accumulated diſtreſſes, that have been brought upon us, and to have thoſe miſchiefs unjuſtly imputed to the perſons who have been labouring to avert them. This muſt be the flattering proſpect to lure the ambition of our future miniſters, who will ſcarce have a conſolation left them, that they do not derive from the conſciouſneſs of their integrity, and the purity of their intentions.

But ſtill, power has its charms, and though the ſalaries of office may be reduced, there will be always wherewithall to tempt the proud and the needy. Theſe are factious men conſpiring together with deep deſigns to throw every thing into bloodſhed and confuſion. Are the great names then at the head of oppoſition to the miniſters all of them of ſuch deſperate fortunes that they have no intereſt in the quiet of the ſtate? Have you no pledges for the peaceable demeanor of a Rockingham, a Shelburne, a Devonſhire, a Portland, a Rutland, a Spencer, a Temple, a Richmond, a Savile, and ſo many more of the firſt landed property in the kingdom? Shall we eaſily believe, that perſons who have ſo deep an intereſt in the

country, are willing to riſque their great poſſeſſions like a band of Catalinarian conſpirators, in idle or wicked revolutions, that might reduce them among the loweſt, but could not raiſe their ſituations? No; if ever ſuch men can be driven in future time to put their great property to the hazard it muſt be from one conſideration, and from one conſideration only, from a conviction, that every peaceable and legal remedy has been tried in vain; that the conſtitution is corrupted beyond the hope of cure; and that there is ſomething ſtill dearer to them, ſtill better worth defending, than even that property at ſtake, the eſſential rights of freedom to themſelves and their poſterity.

But the fact is not as it has been induſtriouſly miſrepreſented. The Yorkſhire freeholders were not ſolicited by party; the meaſures aroſe from their ſpontaneous feelings, and the generous flame has caught from county to county all over the kingdom. If any man approves of the work of reformation, as far as it is now avowed, but fears that the zeal of the reformers may carry them too far in future, let him not, by his conduct, imply a diſapprobation of what is certain from a jealouſy of what may never be the caſe; rather let him ſtand forward, incorporate himſelf in the committees, aſſiſt where his convenience directs him to do ſo, and be ready to oppoſe ſuch meaſures, if any ſuch ſhould ariſe, as his principles may condemn. He will thus ſtand as a mediator between the treachery of one party,

and

and the violence of another; he will be placed honourably to himſelf, and uſefully to his country, and will keep the pledge in his own hands. It is to men of this deſcription that all parties will look up as the true friends to limited monarchy, the moderate ſupporters of juſt prerogative, as well as the liberty of the ſubjects, the guardians of the law and conſtitution, and the real friends and protectors of the ſtate.

In deſpotic countries, where the will of the prince conſtitutes the law, force is the only principle of government; the people, who are conſidered as the property of the monarch, obey, becauſe they fear to reſiſt. Remonſtrance in ſuch countries is accounted criminal; the deluded ſovereign reſigns himſelf to his miniſters; luxury and pleaſure ſurround him, and the oppreſſion of his people are, perhaps, not ſuſpected by him, till their miſeries increaſing, their minds become exaſperated—human nature cannot bear beyond a certain pitch: at length they break out into madneſs and rebellion, and the firſt ſymptom of their diſcontent often ſhakes the throne to its very foundations. In free governments, how different is the ſituation of the monarch! Enjoying all the advantages of pre-eminence, the law ſtands between him and his people. Are they aggrieved? To the law they have recourſe for ſatisfaction; and force and violence is thus precluded to the ſubjects as well as to the prince. This is the ſtate of the Britiſh conſtitution. In Turkey, Perſia, or Indoſtan, ſhould a weak and

obſtinate ſovereign beſtow his confidence upon a miſtreſs, a favourite, or a eunuch; ſhould his oſtenſible vizier be the man the leaſt able to govern, and his counſels fluctuate at the mercy of the cabals of the ſeraglio; ſhould he be inſenſible to the groans of the ſubjects, and ſuffer their cries to be kept far from him, he would probably be the laſt to be acquainted with the miſeries he had brought upon his people, but he would be the firſt victim offered up to their reſentment. Here, on the contrary, does a weak and unpopular ſyſtem of government prevail detrimental to the intereſts of the ſtate; how eaſy is the remedy? The people call upon their natural guardians, their repreſentatives in Parliament for relief; the purſe is cloſed; the ſyſtem is changed; and confidence returns again between the governors and the governed; nor need one ſhop be ſhut in the city of London to procure effects which the ſack of cities and the deſolation of provinces could not obtain in other countries.

And is not this conſtitution worth preſerving, my Lord? Do you really think it were better for the public, and for the individuals who compoſe it, nay for the King upon the throne, that the voice of the people ſhould be ſtifled, that the intercourſe between them and Parliament ſhould be interrupted, that they ſhould have no way of enforcing their opinions but by violences? Truſt me, my Lord, this is a more dangerous doctrine than you are aware of; and would do more towards producing thoſe calamities

you

you point out to us than all the honeſt combinations you affect to be afraid of. Yes, my Lord, it is for this very reaſon, it is becauſe I dread tumults and civil diſcord, that I wiſh theſe aſſociations to become general. They will *overawe* that perfidious ſyſtem of the court, which has hitherto rendered uſeleſs every effort to retrieve the ruin of our affairs; they will purge the conſtitution of that corruption which is upon the point of alienating the people from Parliament; they will reſtore to us our national character, they will give wiſdom and firmneſs to our counſels, and vigour to the execution of them. Believe me, my Lord, no people are ſo baſe that bad government and diſtreſſes will not at laſt rouſe them in deſpair. Do not tempt them by obſtinately perſevering in bad government on the one hand; and taking away all confidence in their governors by avowing a plan of open proſtitution on the other. Our wretched policy has already loſt us the affections of our dependencies; let us preſerve entire what remains to us. If the adviſers of the Crown are inſenſible to our ſituation; if the profligacy of the times has already rendered Parliament ſubſervient to the dictates of a court, let us at leaſt avail ourſelves of an upright, honeſt, free and diſintereſted ſpirit without doors, whilſt it can yet be contained within the bounds of moderation, the law and the conſtitution.

It is now time, my Lord, to releaſe you; but I cannot take leave of your Lordſhip without thanking

thanking you for having ſet the example of the proteſt; from which I expect ſuch advantages to be derived to the cauſe of the petition, that I ſincerely wiſh it may be followed in every county in the kingdom. There is wanting a teſt by which to try the principles of every man who is of any importance in the country; it is good that the friends of the conſtitution ſhould be diſtinguiſhed from its enemies. Let the band of placemen, penſioners, contractors, with all their dependants and expectants, ſtand boldly forward on one ſide; if they deſire an appellation that ſeems now to be in faſhion, let them call themſelves *the King's friends*—I believe the day will come when he will think them his betrayers, and when they will feel they have been as little true to their own *real* intereſt, as to that of the King, and of the public. On the other ſide, let us meet them with that firm, but temperate, and perſevering ſpirit, which the conſciouſneſs of independence and integrity muſt inſpire to thoſe, who have no other object than to ſupport the laws, and to purge away the corruption that has grown imperceptibly to ſuch an exceſs as to create an *undue influence* in the Crown more fatal to liberty than all the open attacks that have been ever made upon it by the power of *prerogative*. We ſhall thus give the lie to all the malicious inſinuations and imputations that have been thrown out by the court to diſcredit our cauſe, by uniting to preſerve peace and good order, to diſcourage violence, and to oppoſe all

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changes

changes in the conſtitution which are dangerous experiments, whilſt we give the moſt effectual aſſiſtance to government, by reſtoring to it the ſprings which are enfeebled by the vices of the times, and that ſyſtem which has been the ſource of our misfortunes.

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